

RHODE **I**SLAND **D**EPARTMENT OF **E**DUCTION

SCHOOL AND **D**ISTRICT
PERFORMANCE
AND
ACCOUNTABILITY **S**YSTEM

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN
(Incorporating the NCLB Accountability System)

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Commissioner
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SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

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THE RHODE ISLAND STATE CONTEXT

In 1997, the Rhode Island General Assembly enacted Article 31, which required all schools to set student performance targets based on state assessments. This legislation also put into place a policy framework and accountability system that requires schools to align their educational process with the Rhode Island school reform agenda, as outlined in the Comprehensive Education Strategy (CES). The core of the agenda is high standards and high achievement for all children. The performance targets were submitted to the Commissioner of Education in November 1998 based on guidance distributed to schools in the spring of 1998.

Article 31 requires the Commissioner to make judgments about school performance on a regular basis. The process used for placing schools into performance categories reflects Rhode Island's core agenda of rigorous standards for all students and the need for ongoing improvement for all schools. The Board of Regents and the Commissioner also expect that schools will close equity gaps in performance among groups of students. Article 31 recognizes that some schools, because of funding disparities and particularly needy student populations, will need extra support from the district, state, and other sources to meet these challenging expectations.

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education adopted a process for districts and schools that were in need of additional financial assistance and technical support. This protocol, Progressive Support and Intervention (PS&I), has been the basis for holding communities accountable for school performance and for increasing student achievement.

THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

On January 8, 2002, the federal Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) was reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This law required that states establish a single accountability system, aligned to a national standard, for each school and district. These expectations are grouped according to ten specific Principles of Accountability:

1. All schools/districts must be held accountable;
2. All students are included in the accountability system;
3. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures are systematic;
4. School/district progress is reviewed annually;
5. Progress of student subgroups is measured separately;
6. Schools/districts are held accountable primarily through assessments;
7. The accountability system includes some additional indicators;
8. English Language Arts (reading) and Mathematics are separate indicators;
9. The accountability system is valid and reliable;
10. Participation rates for students must be at least 95%.

INCORPORATING THE NCLB ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM INTO RHODE ISLAND'S MODEL

Rhode Island has redesigned its accountability system into a single system that merges the NCLB Act (January 2002) requirements and the Rhode Island Comprehensive Education ALL Kids Strategy (CES) based on the 1997 Article 31 law. (Figure 1) This single system will serve as the basis for classifying school performance beginning with the 2003 testing cycle. All schools, districts, and targeted subgroups are expected to achieve 100% proficiency by 2014. The first step for establishing this unified system is adoption of the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) methodology.

FIGURE 1

Core Components

	Was...	Is now ...
Who	Schools	Schools and Districts
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	3%	Individualized for each school
Equity Gaps	Reducing low performance	Improving performance by subgroup
Non-academic Indicators	Learning Support Indicators (LSI)	Attendance and Graduation
Improvement	More Proficient Students	Acknowledges progress toward proficiency
Goal	All students reaching proficiency	All students reaching proficiency by 2014

INTRODUCING AN INDEX PROFICIENCY SYSTEM

Rhode Island's state assessments, the New Standards Reference Examinations in Mathematics and English Language Arts, are regarded as among the most demanding measures of student achievement. Our experience has documented that simply tallying students meeting the standard does not acknowledge the progress many schools are making as students move from showing *little evidence of achievement* to *nearly meeting the standard*. Therefore, Rhode Island has devised an indexing system that recognizes the progress schools are making in moving students from the bottom categories of performance up to *meeting the standard*. In a sense, credit is being given for demonstrated improvement toward *meeting the standard*. (Figure 2)

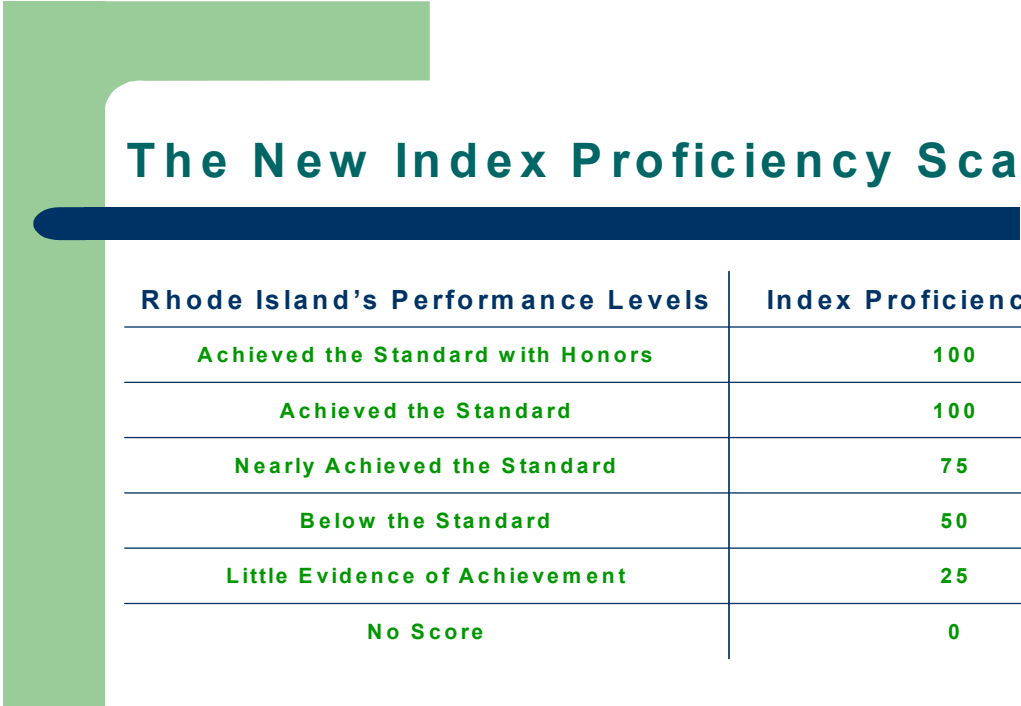
Getting all students to meet the standard is hard work because it depends upon a number of factors relating to school change. Another way of stating this is that change takes time because the system of education relies on everyone and everything related to a student's learning. These include resources, rigorous curriculum, up-to-date materials, expert instruction, and a supportive community, to name a few. Because the single most important factor in student achievement is the quality of the teacher, it is imperative that teachers engage in professional development that will enhance their knowledge, skills, and ability to teach students content and process skills and how to apply them to solve problems as demanded by the standards-based classroom.

Standards-based classrooms require students to do more than memorize facts and use rules. Standards require students to organize data, think critically, analyze information, communicate clearly, critique ideas and materials, apply knowledge, use technology, predict results, and solve problems, to name a few demands. The New Standards Reference Examinations require students to demonstrate evidence of standards-based instruction. These demands for higher levels of thinking skills require a classroom environment filled with opportunities for students to experience situations requiring the application of these skills and abilities.

For many teachers, teaching in a standards-based classroom is very different from how they were trained to teach. Teachers need to engage in professional development over time to develop their expertise and ability to create a standards-based environment. Changes in beliefs and practice have to occur before change in student performance will be seen. These changes are incremental and do not register immediately on state assessments. Since dramatic gains in student performance will not be immediate, giving schools credit for incremental changes through an index system acknowledges the efforts made by schools in striving to get all students to perform at high standards.

Creating a cohesive school where all administrators and teachers work from a consistent curriculum and belief aimed at having all students meet the standards takes effective leadership and a unified faculty. This process evolves over time and requires ongoing commitment by the school community. These examples of systemic change to enhance teaching and learning and student achievement are all indicators of schools making strides toward improvement. The state indexing system recognizes this need for schools to organize around these reform efforts. It provides encouragement to schools and districts that gradually improve over time.

FIGURE 2



The New Index Proficiency Scale

Rhode Island's Performance Levels	Index Proficiency Scale
Achieved the Standard with Honors	100
Achieved the Standard	100
Nearly Achieved the Standard	75
Below the Standard	50
Little Evidence of Achievement	25
No Score	0

REVISED ACCOUNTABILITY DESIGN

The Assessment and Accountability System is aligned to standards that are available for districts to use as guides for curriculum development. The assessments are required by State Law (Article 31 – 1997). Both English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments report student results in the following categories: *Achieved the Standards with Honors*, *Achieved the Standard*, *Nearly Achieved the Standard*, *Below the Standard*, *Little Evidence of Achievement*, and *No Score*. *Achieving the Standard* on the New Standards Reference Exams closely parallels *Proficiency* as measured on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). As seen in Figure 2, points are then assigned to each category/performance level to create an Index Proficiency Score.

The sixth level of performance levels is called *No Score*. This level assigns a zero for students who were required to take the test but for some reason did not get a score. Some of these students may not get a score because they did not complete the test; however, *No Scores* still contribute to the 95% participation indicator, since the students were present for testing. This process reflects the ALL Kids focus of both state education policy and law that requires all public students to participate in the Rhode Island State Assessment Program (RISAP).

BASELINES

The calculation of baselines in English Language Arts and Mathematics, as stipulated by the NCLB Act, is the first step in determining the performance of schools through Index Proficiency Scores. Rhode Island, like all states, is required to identify its baselines (starting points) for 2002. The baselines determine how much students need to improve between 2002 and the deadline of 2014 –the year the NCLB legislation specifies that 100% of students will be proficient in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Rhode Island's baseline was calculated by averaging 2000, 2001, and 2002 statewide assessment results. Baselines were established for English Language Arts and Mathematics at each of the three levels: elementary (grades K-5), middle (grades 6-8) and high (grades 9-12). The Index Proficiency points which correspond to each student's performance level on each subtest for three years' data are added up to obtain a school's Index Proficiency Score. In keeping with NCLB legislation, the baseline was determined by identifying, based on a ranking of all schools, the score of the school in which the student at the 20th percentile of Rhode Island's total enrollment at that grade was enrolled. Another way of explaining this is that 80% of the students in the state are in schools at or above the baseline and 20% of our students are in schools that have scores below the baseline.

The English Language Arts and Mathematics state baselines are compared with the overall Index Proficiency Scores of each school and district, as well as with the scores of each subgroup at the school, district, and state levels to determine the school's status. The method for calculating Rhode Island's baseline scores can be seen in Figures 3 and 4.

FIGURE 3

Baselines

- Baselines establish our starting points for improvement in ELA and Mathematics.
- Rhode Island has ELA and Mathematics baselines (or starting points) for elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Baselines were established by assigning Index Proficiency Points to each student's scores and then aggregating all of the subtests in a content area over the years 2000, 2001, and 2002.
- Schools' aggregated Index Proficiency scores were then rank-ordered from lowest to highest.
- The numbers of students in each of the lowest performing schools were added together until 20% of all RI students in that grade were counted. The score for that school becomes the baseline for the state.

FIGURE 4

Elementary Mathematics: *Determining the Baseline*

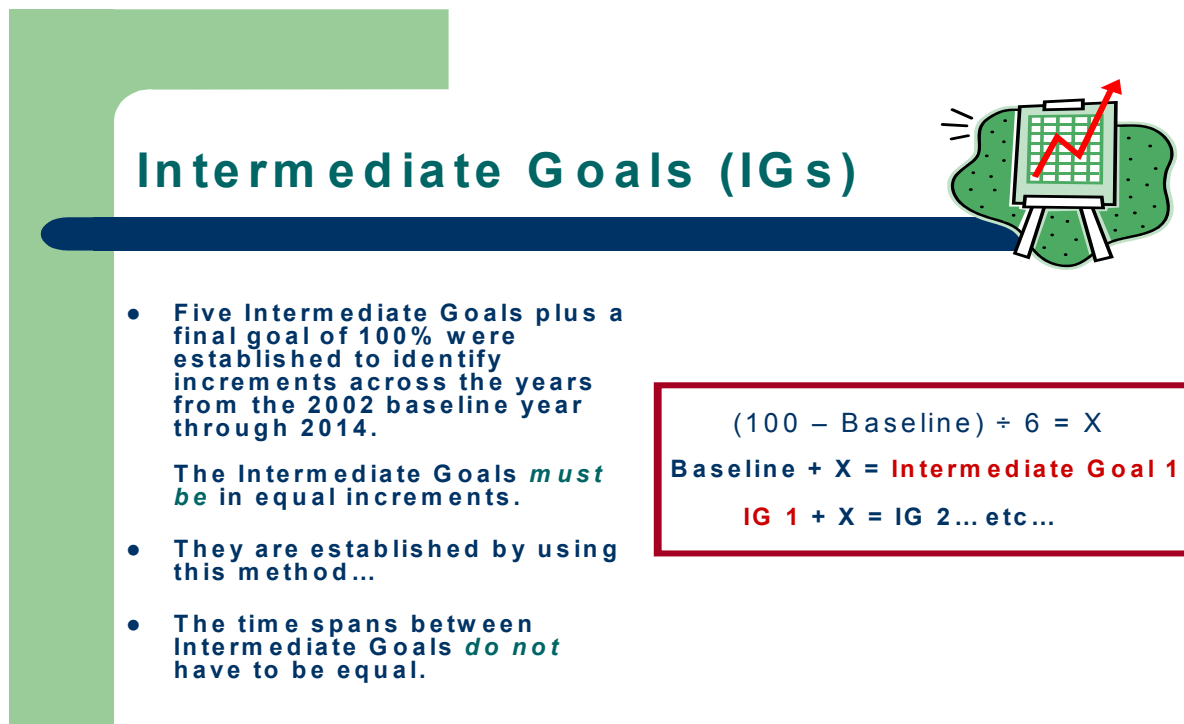
School	Index Proficiency	Enrollment	Cumulative Enrollment
1	44.2	4	4
2	46.9	6	10
3	52.5	12	22
4	58.6	8	30
5	61.7	10	40
6	63.9	6	46
↓	↓	↓	
15	92.4	200 students	

Baseline is set
at 20% of
Cumulative
Enrollment

RHODE ISLAND'S INTERMEDIATE GOALS (IGs)

Another requirement of NCLB specifies that states identify five Intermediate Goals between the 2002 baseline/starting point and the sixth and final 2014 goal of 100% proficiency. The Intermediate Goals for elementary, middle, and high schools must increase in equal increments but they need not be spaced evenly over the twelve-year time span. This distinction has allowed Rhode Island some flexibility within the NCLB legislation. (Figure 5)

FIGURE 5



Rhode Island spaced its Intermediate Goals unevenly over the twelve-year time span. Figure 6 demonstrates this point by showing that there is a three-year span between each of the first three Intermediate Goals. The uneven time span is designed to give schools starting below the 2002 baseline/starting point an opportunity to implement their school improvement plans and catch up before Intermediate Goals increase. Steady growth is expected annually at the end of the twelve-year time span because we are confident that larger gains can be expected as schools become focused and build on best practices for teaching and learning.

FIGURE 6**Intermediate Goals**

	Elementary		Middle		High	
Year	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2013	96.1	93.7	94.5	91.1	93.6	90.8
2012	92.1	87.3	89.2	82.1	87.4	81.6
2011	88.1	80.9	83.9	73.1	81.2	72.4
2008	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2005	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
Baseline 2002	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8

**ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM OF INTERMEDIATE GOALS
AND
THE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) are the basis for making yearly determinations of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) using the NCLB guidelines. AMOs specify each year's minimum Index Proficiency Score a school must achieve to be moderately performing. The system of establishing Intermediate Goals and AMOs for Rhode Island is identified in Figure 7.

Rhode Island's AMOs have the same Index Proficiency Score as the most recent Intermediate Goal. For example, the AMOs in 2003 and 2004 are the same as in the baseline year of 2002. Rhode Island's application of Intermediate Goals and AMOs is consistent with our theory of change. We anticipate that the strongest academic gains will take place in the latter end of the twelve-year timeline. The earlier years will recognize growth from lower levels of performance toward reaching proficiency. Schools in Need of Improvement and districts will need time to adjust curriculum, improve teachers' knowledge base and instructional practices, and organize their resources to support all students. Figure 8 displays all of Rhode Island's goals from 2002 through 2014.

FIGURE 7

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)

	Elementary		Middle		High	
Year	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2013	96.1					
2012	92.1					
2011	88.1					
2010	84.1	←				
2009	84.1	←				
2008	84.1					
2007	80.1	←				
2006	80.1	←				
2005	80.1					
2004	76.1	←				
2003	76.1	←				
<u>Baseline 2002</u>	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8

NCLB requires Annual Measurable Objectives to determine whether a school has met its AYP.

Rhode Island's Annual Measurable Objectives maintain the same index proficiency score as the most recently preceding Intermediate Goal.

FIGURE 8

Annual Measurable Objectives/Targets

	Elementary		Middle		High	
Year	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2013	96.1	93.7	94.5	91.1	93.6	90.8
2012	92.1	87.3	89.2	82.1	87.4	81.6
2011	88.1	80.9	83.9	73.1	81.2	72.4
2010	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2009	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2008	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2007	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2006	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2005	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2004	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8
2003	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8
<u>Baseline 2002</u>	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8

PLACEMENT INTO SCHOOL-PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS

Schools and districts will be designated as *High Performing*, *Moderately Performing*, or as being *In Need of Improvement*. In addition, each school and district that is *In Need of Improvement* will be classified as *making progress* or *making insufficient progress*. Schools that are *Moderately* or *High Performing* will be classified as *sustaining* or *improving* their performance. Schools in the *Moderate* or *High Performing* classification may be classified with the label of *Caution* if it is their first year of having non-academic indicators that are below the defined targets. (See page 15.)

For 2003 and for future classifications of schools and districts, the formula for classification has the following elements:

- Comparison of Index Proficiency results against the official state baselines and against the projected track of change in future years toward reaching 100 % proficiency by 2014.
- Comparison using the performance for disaggregated subgroups of the student population, but only where the number of students reliably supports such an analysis. Data will be analyzed when there are at least 45 students in a subgroup over a three-year time span.
- Separate analysis for English Language Arts performance and Mathematics performance.
- A final check to determine if AMOs have been met for graduation rates in high schools or the attendance rates in elementary and middle schools.
- An analysis to determine that at least 95% of the students participated in both the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.

The Rhode Island system uses multiple years of data to evaluate schools. Thus, each year a school's or district's performance is considered to be based on the most recent three years of assessment data. For example, to test whether a school has met its 2004 AMOs, the analysis will combine test scores from 2002, 2003, and 2004 to compare against the statewide AMOs for 2004.

Experience with three-year averaging has taught us that occasionally a school will show strong improvement in the current year that would be diluted by using a three-year average. Therefore, the Rhode Island system allows for a second comparison. If the current (single year) Index Proficiency Score would improve the classification of a school, then only the single year's data will be used. Also, this option cannot be used for very small schools (fewer than 45 students at a tested grade in the current year). These schools will be assigned its three-year aggregated Index Proficiency Score for recordkeeping purposes.

CLOSING EQUITY GAPS

The NCLB Act mirrors Rhode Island's CES in that it requires steady improvement in various subgroups of student population. In the new accountability system, each subgroup's progress must be determined separately. Figure 9 shows the subgroups for which equity gaps must be closed.

All subgroups will be held to the same baseline, Intermediate Goals, and AMOs outlined in Figure 8. It is important to emphasize that subgroups will be disaggregated only when there are at least 45 students over a three-year time span. Further, although there may not be 45 students in a subgroup at the school level, there may be at the district level, and therefore the district level accountability process will include these students.

FIGURE 9

Equity for All Students

NCLB addresses equity gaps by requiring data be disaggregated by the following subgroups:

1. Economically Disadvantaged (School Lunch Status)
2. Native American
3. Asian
4. Black
5. Hispanic
6. White
7. Special Needs (IEP)
8. Limited English Proficient (LEP)



SAFE HARBOR PROVISIONS

The Safe Harbor Provision, part of the NCLB Act, provides another mechanism for schools to demonstrate that they are making progress. (Figure 11) This provision provides an opportunity for schools In Need of Improvement beginning well below the baseline Index Proficiency Score to be recognized for growth that is significant, even though the progress made does not meet the current AMOs. An entire school or district or any of the designated subgroups within the school (or district) may fail to meet their AMOs. Such a school or district is considered to have failed the Status Review and may be identified for improvement. However, the provisions of NCLB give these schools and districts the opportunity for further review of their performance before a final decision is made on their classification. Safe Harbor Review is available for schools as well as districts. To benefit from this review, the school or district must satisfy three criteria:

1. Have a graduation rate or an attendance rate (elementary and middle schools) at or above the current AMOs or improving at an adequate rate of progress, and
2. Have an assessment participation rate of at least 95%.
3. Decrease the gap between its current Index Proficiency Score and 100 by 10%.

A final provision for further review of schools and districts that have failed both the Status Review and the Safe Harbor Review is the appeal process. Schools and districts have 30 days from the date of notification to challenge the accuracy of the data that would lead to their proposed classification.

FIGURE 10

The Safe Harbor Provision

A school or district that has met its attendance or graduation AMO and its participation rates in ELA and Mathematics, but has failed to meet its AMOs in the assessment indicators, including subgroups, may apply for Safe Harbor review.

The Provision requires that:

- ❖ A school or district that has not met its AMOs **BUT**
- ❖ has reduced the number of students **who are not proficient** by 10%
- ❖ **has then** met the Safe Harbor Provision and is not subject to NCLB sanctions and corrective actions.
- ❖ The State will classify this school or district as in need of improvement/ making progress

EXAMPLE

A school has a Mathematics Index Proficiency Score of 42.

$100 - 42 = 58$ (the gap)
 10% of the gap is 5.8%
 $42 + 5.8 = 47.8$

OTHER INDICATORS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

There are three additional accountability indicators. Under the new accountability system, schools and districts must test at least 95% of their enrolled students in English Language Arts and Mathematics. (Figure 11) The third indicator measures attendance at the elementary and middle school levels and graduation rates at the high school level. Rhode Island's baseline attendance rate is 90% and the final goal is 95%. Schools that have attendance rates that fluctuate between 90% and 95% will have met the standard. The NCLB Act stipulates that every state must have a 95% high school graduation rate by the year 2014. A baseline was established with the same method used to calculate the other baselines. That is, all high schools' graduation rates were rank ordered from lowest to highest. The high school that has a 71.4 % graduation rate represents the school at which 20% of the state's high school students are enrolled. The AMOs for high school graduation rate are outlined in Figure 12. These non-academic indicators are important to monitor and review each year.

FIGURE 11

NCLB Nonacademic Indicators

- Schools and districts must demonstrate that at least 95 % of their students completed or attempted the state assessments in ELA and Mathematics annually.
- Initially, elementary and middle schools must have an attendance rate of at least 90 % or higher.
- Initially, high schools must have a graduation rate of Rhode Island's baseline, 71.4 %.

FIGURE 12

High School Graduation Rate

2014	95.0
2013	90.9
2012	87.0
2011	83.1
2010	79.2
2009	79.2
2008	79.2
2007	75.3
2006	75.3
2005	75.3
2004	71.4
2003	71.4
Baseline 2002	71.4

The graduation
rate target for
2014 is 95%.

THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Rhode Island's Accountability System will classify every public school in the state. Each school will be classified in one of the following categories:

High Performing and Improving

or

High Performing and Sustaining

or

High Performing with Caution

(attendance, graduation rate, test participation)

Moderately Performing and Improving

or

Moderately Performing and Sustaining

or

Moderately Performing with Caution

(attendance, graduation rate, test participation)

***School in Need of Improvement/Making Progress**

or

**** School in Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress**

* Schools in this category are performing below the AMOs in the aggregate or in one or more disaggregated categories of student achievement but have made progress under the Safe Harbor Provision of NCLB.

** Schools in this category are performing below the AMOs in the aggregate or in one or more of the disaggregated categories of student achievement and have **not** made adequate progress to achieve Safe Harbor and/or have had one of the non-academic indicators below the current AMOs for two consecutive years.

FIGURE 13

Schools and districts will be classified as high, moderate, or in need of improvement

- Classifications will be based on 21 pieces of data:

School-level performance in ELA and Mathematics	2
Subgroup performance in ELA and Mathematics	16
Non-academic indicator (attendance or graduation rate)	1
95% participation rates in ELA and Mathematics	2
TOTAL	21

NOTE: Districts will be classified by use of up to 63 pieces of data (21 high school, 21 middle school, and 21 elementary school)

High Performing Schools: These schools must have an Index Proficiency Score at or above the statewide third Intermediate Goal (2011) in both **English Language Arts and Mathematics**. Each disaggregated group must have an Index Proficiency Score at or above the current AMOs. High Performing schools may not have any of the non-academic indicators (attendance or graduation rate) or participation rate target (95%) below the current AMOs for more than one year. Schools that are High Performing based on assessment data (Figure 14) but have any non-academic indicator below the current AMOs for one year are noted with a *Caution* designation.

FIGURE 14

High Performance

- A school is classified as high performing if its performance is above the 3rd Intermediate Goal in **BOTH** ELA and Mathematics.
- So for 2003:
 - ❖ Assessment Index Proficiency scores above the 3rd Intermediate Goal in 2011 in both ELA and Mathematics
 - ❖ No subgroups have an Assessment Index Proficiency score below the Annual Measurable Objective for the current year
 - ❖ An attendance rate above 90%
 - OR**
 - ❖ A graduation rate above the 3rd Intermediate Goal of 83.1%
 - ❖ At least 95% of students completed or attempted the ELA and Mathematics assessments.

Note: A school could have one or all of the nonacademic indicators below the AMO for one year and still be High Performing. If any combination of these indicators is still below the AMO for two years, then a school is considered a school in need of improvement.

Moderately Performing Schools: Schools will be classified as such if the Index Proficiency Score is at or above the current AMOs in both **English Language Arts and Mathematics** but not enough to rate as High Performing. Each disaggregated subgroup also must have an Index Proficiency Score at or above the current AMOs. Moderately Performing schools may not have any of the non-academic indicators (attendance or graduation rate) or participation rate (95%) below the current AMOs for more than one year. (Figure 15) Schools that are Moderately Performing in assessment but have non-academic indicators below the AMOs for one year are noted with a *Caution* designation.

FIGURE 15

Moderate Performance

- A school is classified as moderately performing if its performance is at or above the current Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) in ELA and Mathematics.
- So for 2003:
 - ❖ Assessment Index Proficiency scores, including all subgroups, at or above the current AMOs.
 - ❖ An attendance rate above 90%
 - OR**
 - ❖ A graduation rate above 71.4%
 - ❖ At least 95% of students completed or attempted state assessments.

Note: A school could have a combination of these non-academic indicators below the AMO for one year and still be moderately performing. If any combination of these indicators is below the AMO for two years, then a school is considered a school in need of improvement.

Improving or Sustaining Schools: High Performing and Moderately Performing schools are considered *Improving or Sustaining*. A High Performing and Sustaining school is one that maintains an aggregated performance at or above the third Intermediate Goal (2010-2011). If a school is Moderate or High Performing, it will also be classified as *Improving* if the Index Proficiency Score for one year increases by at least two points from the Index Proficiency Score of the prior year based on a three-year average. High and Moderately Performing Schools that do not meet a non-academic indicator for one year will keep the High or Moderate classification. However, the first year of a non-academic indicator falling below the current AMOs will be noted with a *Caution* designation. If any school falls below the current AMOs for a second year based on any non-academic indicator, the school will be designated as In Need of Improvement.

FIGURE 16

Improving or Sustaining

High Performing Schools

- High performing schools will be designated as improving if they:
 - ❖ Increase the Assessment Proficiency Index Scores by 2 points or more in both ELA and Mathematics.
 - ❖ Maintain or increase their attendance rate of 90 %

OR

 - ❖ Maintain or increase their graduation rate of 83.1 %

High performing schools not meeting these criteria will be designated as **Sustaining**.
 High performing schools not meeting the current AMO for one year on a non-academic indicator will be classified with a **Caution** designation.

FIGURE 17

Improving or Sustaining

Moderately Performing Schools

- Moderately performing schools will be designated as improving if they:
 - ❖ Increase the Assessment Proficiency Index Scores by 2 points or more in both ELA and Mathematics.
 - ❖ Maintain an attendance rate of at least 90 % and

OR

 - ❖ Maintain a graduation rate above the current AMO (71.4 % in 2003)

Moderately performing schools not meeting these criteria will be designated as a **Sustaining**.
 Moderately performing schools not meeting the current AMO for one year on a non-academic indicator will be classified with at Caution designation

Schools In Need of Improvement: Schools will be classified as being In Need of Improvement if they have any Assessment Index Proficiency Score below the current AMO in either **English Language Arts or Mathematics**. This includes any subgroup or aggregated assessment data. If a school has any combination of non-academic indicators below the current AMO for two consecutive years, they will also be considered as a School In Need of Improvement. (Figure 18)

FIGURE 18

School in Need of Improvement

- A school is classified as in Need of Improvement if ANY of the 21 pieces of data is below the current year's Annual Measurable Objective.
- So for 2003:
 - ❖ Any Assessment Index Proficiency score, including any subgroup, below the current AMOs.
 - ❖ An attendance rate below 90% (2nd year)
 - OR**
 - ❖ A graduation rate below the current AMO (71.4%) (2nd year)
 - ❖ Fewer than 95% of students completed or attempted the ELA or Mathematics assessments. (2nd year)

Making Progress or Insufficient Progress: Schools In Need of Improvement are considered to be *Making Progress* or *Making Insufficient Progress*. Schools considered *to be Making Progress (Safe Harbor)* are those schools In Need of Improvement who have increased their assessment Index Proficiency Scores that are below the current AMO, including all subgroups, to meet the Safe Harbor requirements. (Figure 19) Also, they must have met the AMOs for all non-academic indicators. Schools In Need of Improvement classified with the *Insufficient Progress* designation are those schools who have not increased the Assessment Index Proficiency Scores that are below the current AMO, including all subgroups enough to meet the Safe Harbor requirements. Also, schools who have not met the current AMOs for two years in any of their non-academic indicators are also classified in this category. (Figure 20)

FIGURE 19

Making Progress

Schools in Need of Improvement

Schools in need of improvement will be designated as making progress if they:

- ❖ Increase the Assessment Index Proficiency Scores that are below the current Annual Measurable Objectives, including all subgroups, to meet Safe Harbor requirements but still have scores below the AMOs and
- ❖ maintain an attendance rate of 90% or more

OR

- ❖ maintain a graduation rate above the current AMO (71.4% in 2003)
- ❖ At least 95% of their students have completed or attempted the State Assessments

Schools in need of improvement that are making progress **do not have to proceed to the next level of sanctions and corrective processes** mandated by NCLB regulations.




FIGURE 20

Insufficient Progress

Schools in Need of Improvement

Schools in need of improvement will be designated as making insufficient progress if they:

- ❖ Have not increased the Index Proficiency Scores that are below the current Annual Measurable Objectives, including all subgroups, enough to meet Safe Harbor requirements.
 - ❖ Have not maintained an attendance rate of 90% or more for two consecutive years (elementary and middle schools),
- OR**
- ❖ Have not maintained a graduation rate above the current AMO for two consecutive years (high schools), or
 - ❖ Have not achieved participation rates of 95% or more for two consecutive years.

Note: Schools with this designation will be subject to the NCLB and/or Progressive Support and Intervention sanctions and corrective processes if they have this designation for two or more years. A school must make Safe Harbor progress for two consecutive years in the identified area of needing improvement, in order to be placed into another classification status. The status of schools and districts with this designation will be notified at the time of their classification.

STATUS DESIGNATION

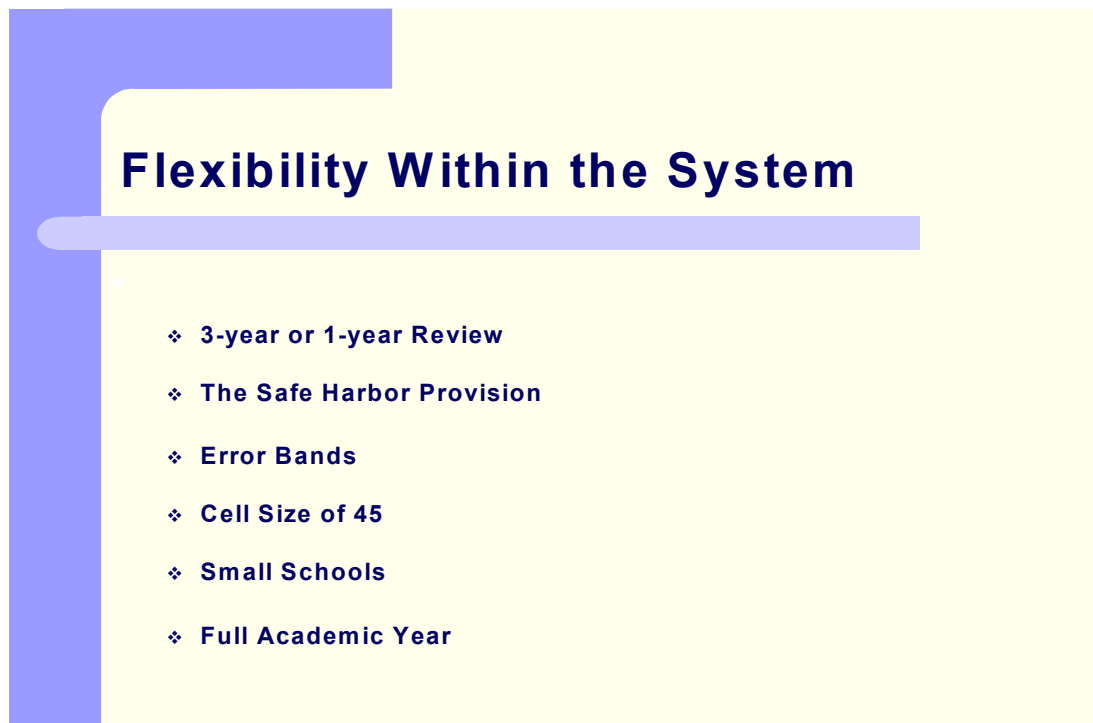
Every school's classification report will include a status designation to further explain their data and its consequences. The status key includes:

- 1= New School, First Year of Classification**
- 2= Watch, A School In Need of Improvement for the First Year**
- 3= Choice, Title I School**
- 4= Supplemental Services, Title I School**
- 5= Corrective Action, Title I School**
- 6= Delay, Title I School, First Year of Making Progress**
- 7= PS&I, Non-Title I School, 2 or More Years of Insufficient Progress**

FLEXIBILITY WITHIN THE SYSTEM

Rhode Island's School and District Performance and Accountability System has built-in flexibility to ensure as much fairness as possible. These aspects of the Accountability System will serve to provide reliability to the data. Figure 21 lists those flexibilities:

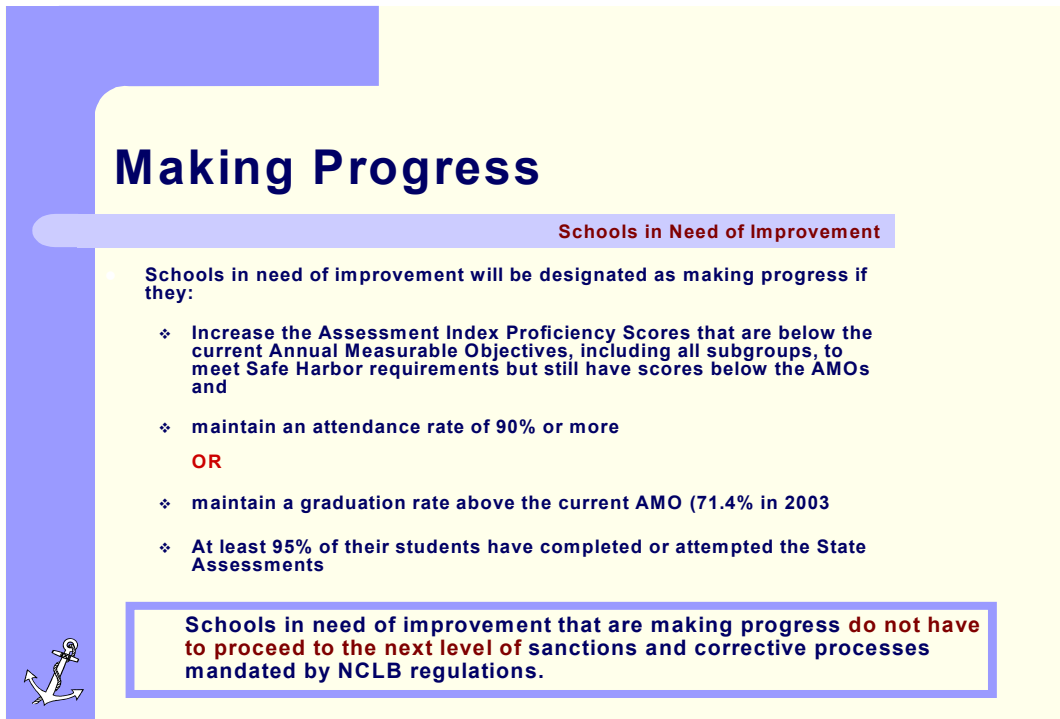
FIGURE 21



THREE –YEAR AND ONE-YEAR REVIEW

Rhode Island’s Accountability System also provides for the three-year or one-year analysis for all schools. The process for this review is outlined in Figure 22.

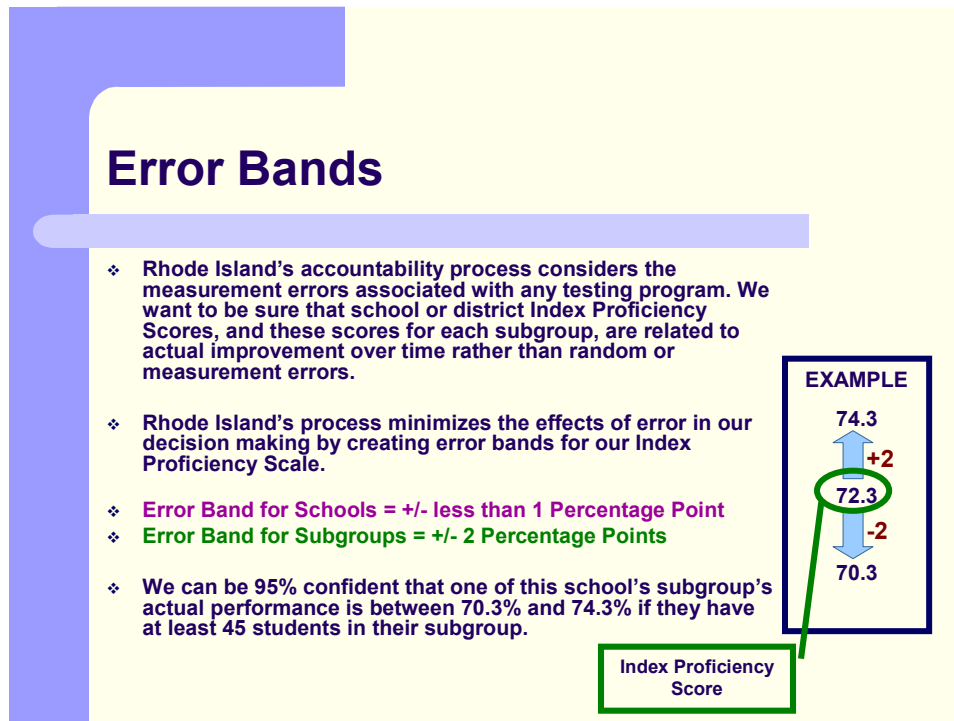
FIGURE 22



ERROR BANDS

Error Bands: Rhode Island's Accountability System also acknowledges that there may be measurement errors associated with any assessment. This is addressed through the use of error bands. The method of calculating error bands is found in Figure 23.

FIGURE 23



CELL SIZE

CELL SIZE: As determinations are being made about school performance using subgroups of student populations, a new feature of the Rhode Island School and District Accountability System is to avoid making decisions based on small participation sizes (*n*) in the state assessments that would make a school's classification unreliable. Figures 24 and 25 illustrate the *Rule of 45*, which will be used in classification of schools.

FIGURE 24

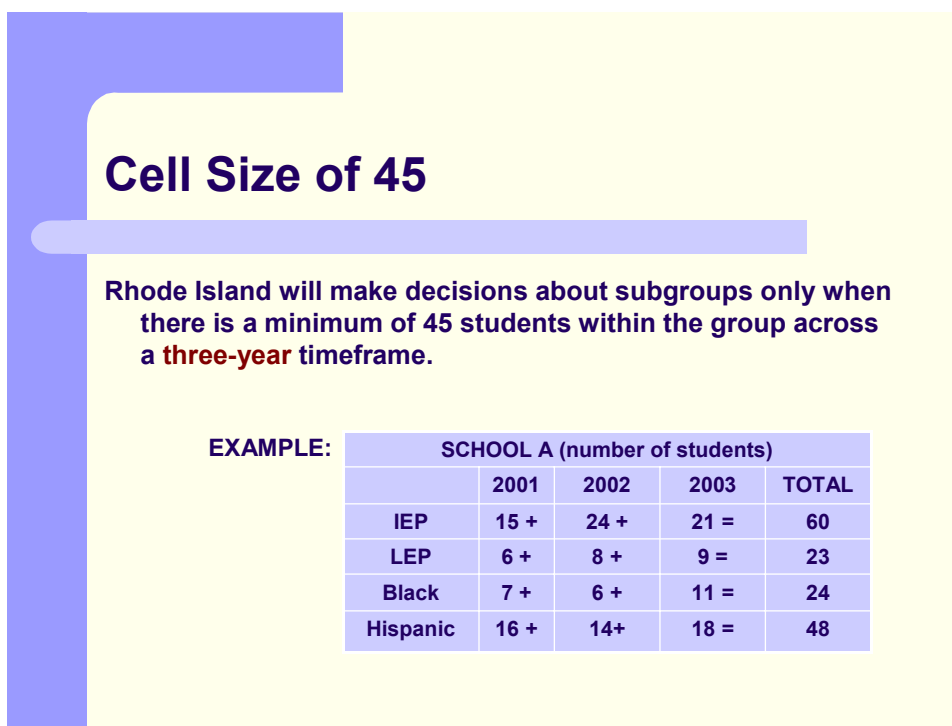
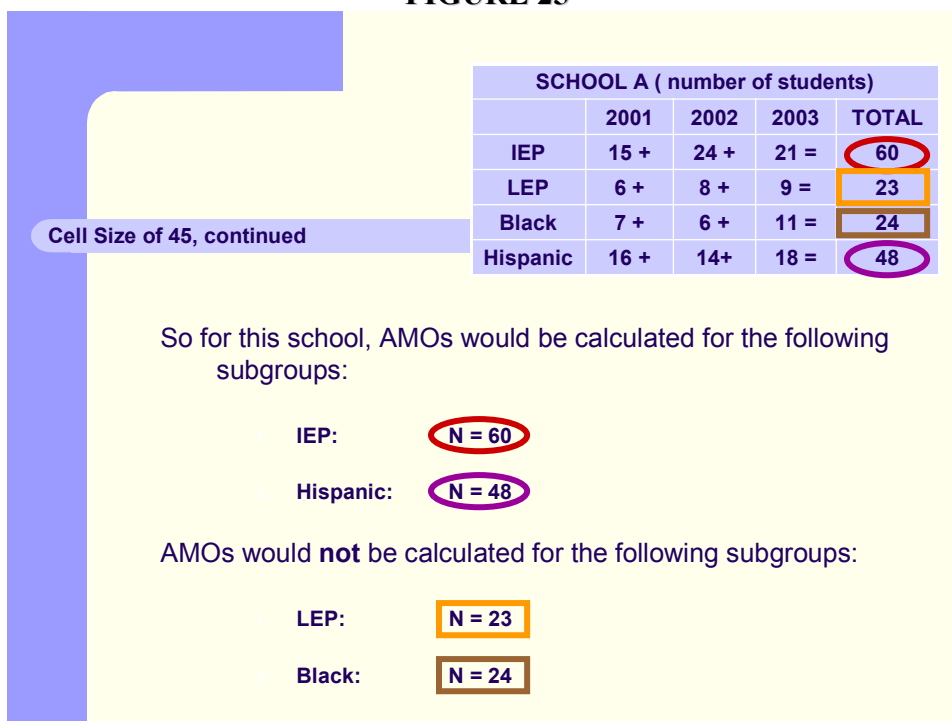


FIGURE 25



SMALL SCHOOLS

Small Schools: Likewise, Rhode Island's Accountability System incorporates a small schools provision. This provision allows schools with a fewer than 45 students enrolled at a grade level for three years to be part of the school classified process.

FIGURE 26

Small Schools

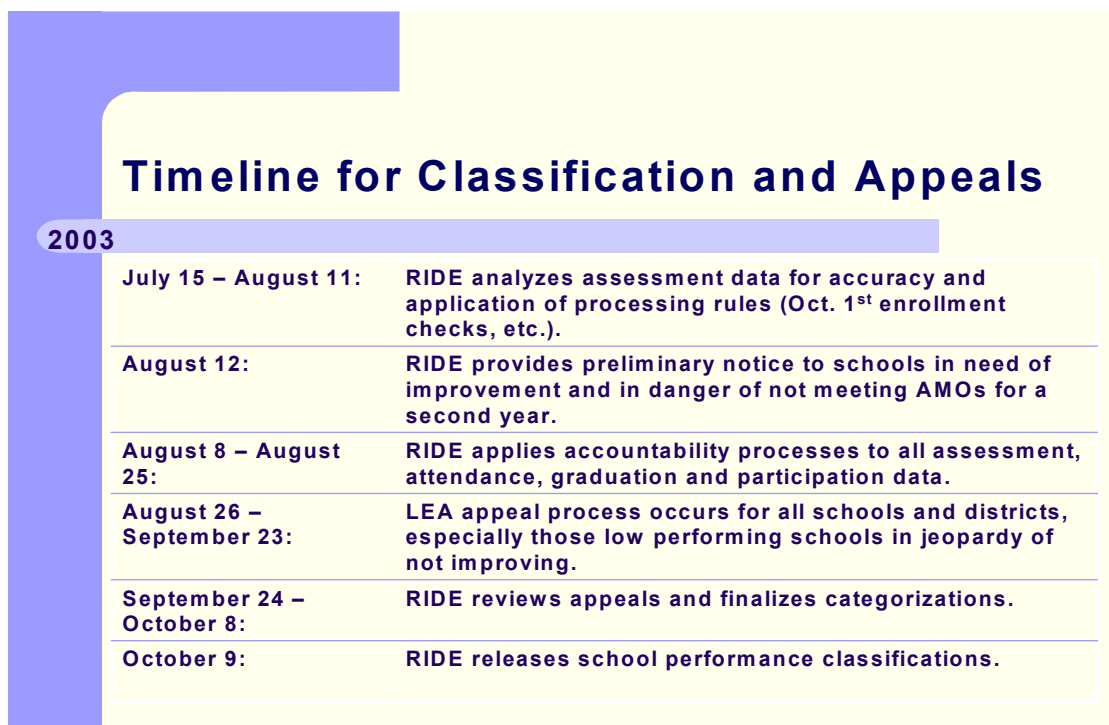
- Schools that have fewer than 45 students enrolled across a three-year period still must be classified as part of the State's accountability process.
- The process for classifying small schools allows us to adjust for the smaller population of students by creating a wider error band. This means that:
 1. **These schools will be grouped in the same manner as all the other schools; however**
 2. **It will not be possible to disaggregate any of the subgroup population data**

SCHOOLS WITH SEVERAL TESTED GRADES

If a school's grade configuration includes more than one tested grade (for example grades 4 and 8 or 4, 8 and 10), an Index Proficiency Score is calculated by combining student performance results across grades. The total Index Proficiency Score is then compared with the baseline and AMOs of the highest grade in that school (for example, grade 8 or grade 10).

CLASSIFICATION AND APPEALS

FIGURE 24



DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY AND CLASSIFICATIONS

The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) regulations also call for all school districts to be held to the same standards as schools in terms of accountability. This provision is also in keeping with Rhode Island's Article 31 (1997) and Regents' Accountability System, which calls for Progressive Support and Intervention in districts that are In Need of Improvement.

The Rhode Island district classification system therefore will mirror the school classification system. A district-performance classification will occur at the same time that school-level results are forwarded to the communities. These results will be broken down by level (elementary, middle, and high). For example, a district may be In Need of Improvement at the middle level but High Performing at the elementary level. School districts designated as being in Need of Improvement at any one of the three levels will also be subject to Progressive Support and Intervention protocols as determined by the Commissioner of Education under the Article 31 legislation. The nature of the accountability actions are fully described in the Progressive Support and Intervention document (August 2003) for both federal and state implementation.